CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM

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Mr. John Winther
3697 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Suite 100
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Dear John:

Thank you for your recent letter documenting your thoughts on CALFED alternative formulation. They will be carefully considered as we move forward with the refinement process.

Your concerns about using Bouldin Island as a floodway are well founded, both with respect to costs and wildlife habitat impacts. For those alternative variations relying on expanded flood and conveyance capacity along the alignment of the South Mokelumne River, the challenge is to provide sufficient channel capacity all the way to the San Joaquin River. Failure to do so would result in increased flood risk south of Hog Slough. We will continue to explore configurations which reduce or provide alternatives to the dependence on flooding Bouldin Island.

You suggested that groundwater storage in both the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys should be common to all alternatives. All three CALFED alternatives do include such storage, but we have chosen to evaluate the alternative variations of Delta conveyance alternatives with and without storage in order to bring into sharper focus the differences in benefits and impacts of the various Delta conveyance strategies.

You suggested that an isolated facility component evaluation should include the possibility of serving local water needs along its route, including service to meet local agricultural demands and the City of Stockton for fishery and water quality benefits. Such an assessment will be included, although it is uncertain at this time how detailed that assessment will be for the programmatic document.

The preliminary modeling results have several limitations which must be kept in mind when interpreting the output. As you correctly noted the current modeling assumptions, arrived at through a consensus process among the CALFED agencies, assume no relaxation of Delta standards for implementation of isolated conveyance. In addition, the current

version of DWRSIM uses the antecedent flow-salinity relationships (G-model) developed by Dr. Richard Denton et. al. which is based on current Delta geometry and operating history. The current system modeling does not evaluate potential changes in the outflow-salinity relationship which may result from changes in Delta geometry (including addition of an isolated facility). The modeling also does not include in-Delta storage. Refinements in the modeling of CALFED alternatives will continue over the next several months, including incorporation of in-Delta storage and exploration of a range of operating assumptions in sensitivity analyses.

We are acting on your suggestion to revisit the concept of a hydraulic barrier in Georgiana Slough. The major concerns with this approach are potential fishery impacts associated with a large number of in-stream cylindrical screens downstream of Georgiana Slough. We will keep you informed as this evaluation proceeds.

In-Delta storage components are being added to some variations of Alternative 1 and 2. They were inadvertently omitted in the Alternative 2 descriptions distributed in the Draft Phase II Alternative Descriptions (May 8, 1997).

I share your concern about the high reported salinities reported by our preliminary Delta simulation model results. Substantial effort by CALFED support staff and the stakeholder community is currently being devoted to determining the cause of the modeling results and making the appropriate adjustments. It is important that the modeled salinity results not just be appropriately scaled for comparison of in-Delta alternatives, but also for evaluation of local water treatment options and their associated costs for the water using public.

If you have any further questions or comments, please write or call me at 916-657-2666 or call Stein Buer at 916-653-6628.

Sincerely,

Lester A. Snow
Executive Director